

REMARKS

Claims 1-5 are pending in the application.

Claims 1-5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kellock et al. (U.S. 6,259,676) in view of Juntunen (U.S. 6,647,018). Claims 1-5 are also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Kellock et al. in view of Tihonen et al. (U.S. 5,947,030).

In both rejections it's admitted in the Office Action that Kellock does not explicitly show the switch transmitting to the access node a piece of test specifying information. The Office Action relies on the secondary art to show the test specifying information.

However applicant's claimed invention provides several features which are not suggested by the combination of cited references, for example:

wherein a V5 interface protocol is used as the communication protocol,

said switch includes a processing unit for transmitting to said communication node a piece of test specifying information, inputted from said maintenance/operation terminal, for indicating a subscriber test for the subscriber's line and subscriber circuit that correspond to the accommodated subscriber by use of specifying information of a message type based on the V5 interface protocol ("feature 1"), and

said communication node includes a processing unit for making said testing device execute the subscriber test on the basis of the test specifying information received via said logical link from said switch, and sending test result information for informing of a result of the test back to said switch by use of specifying information of a message type based on the V5 interface protocol ("feature 2").

None of cited references, Kellock et al. (Kellock), Juntunen et al. (Juntunen) and Tiihonen et al. (Tiihonen), explicitly disclose the features 1 and 2 of applicant's claimed invention as pointed out above for at least the following reasons.

Kellock shows that in Fig. 1, 2 and 5, a network connection unit 210 of an access node 2 connects the access node 2 to a local exchange 1 via a V5.2 interface. However in contrast to applicant's claimed invention, a test unit 211 is not connected to the local exchange 1 and is connected to a network management system via a Q3 interface. The Q3 interface is a network management interface and differs from the V5 interface that is an interface between a switch (local exchange) and a communication node (access node).

Thus, the reference Kellock does not disclose or teach the features 1 and 2 of applicant's claimed invention.

In the reference Juntunen, the V5 interface is not used for testing a subscriber's line and a subscriber circuit. Juntunen shows that user (subscriber) port states (BLOCKED state, OPERATIONAL state) of an access node AN2, accommodating a subscriber terminal equipment TE, are monitored various network elements (LE, AN1 and AN2 in Figure) using a status engine. Neither reference Kellock or Juntunen, singly or in combination, teaches or discloses the features 1 and 2 of applicant's claimed invention.

Tiihonen shows a subscriber multiplexer (MUX1 or MUX2 in Fig. 2) that allows checking of a condition of its subscriber interfaces. The multiplexer is connected to a telephone exchange (1) via a PCM connection. The frame structure of the PCM connection is in accordance with G.732 and the interface between the multiplexer and the telephone exchange is a V2 interface in accordance with Q.512. The V2 interface differs from the V5 interface.

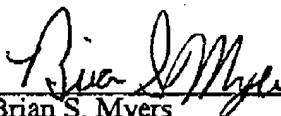
Neither reference Kellock or Tiihonen, singly or in combination, teaches or discloses the features 1 and 2 of applicant's claimed invention.

Because the combination of references does not describe nor even suggest the unique combination of features claimed by the applicant, it is respectfully requested the rejections be withdrawn and the claims passed to allowance. In addition each of applicant's dependent claims includes features providing further advantages and distinguishing features from the cited references.

In view of the remarks set forth above, this application is in condition for allowance which action is respectfully requested. However, if for any reason the Examiner should consider this application not to be in condition for allowance, the Examiner is respectfully requested to telephone the undersigned attorney at the number listed below prior to issuing a further Action.

Any fee due with this paper may be charged to Deposit Account No. 50-1290.

Respectfully submitted,



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